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ABSTRACT

This report details the Los Angeles City College's (California) strategic plan for the years 2002 to 2008. The report, the product of a process of commissioning a "Vision Team" and holding "Town Meetings," resulted in eight institution-wide priorities: (1) to foster a culture of academic excellence; (2) to maintain and enhance a safe campus environment; (3) to expand and strengthen partnerships with business and community; (4) to create a student-centered learning environment; (5) to enhance the college's visibility and reputation for quality; (6) to increase college resources; (7) to develop and implement increased allocation of resources; and (8) to collect and use data more systematically for organizational improvement. A set of strategies, intended outcomes, and "vital signs" are provided for each priority, as is an article that explains the priority and the opinions campus leaders have about it. Includes a list of Town Meeting participants and a discussion of economic, demographic, educational, public policy, societal, and technological planning assumptions. (ND)

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CREATING AN URBAN OASIS OF LEARNING

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LOS ANGELES CITY COLLEGE

LOS ANGELES CITY COLLEGE

STRATEGIC PLAN 2002-2008

Dr. Mary Spangler

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Los Angeles City College is an institution of higher education, located in one of the largest, most ethnically diverse cities in the world. As with any densely populated region, there are perils: economic pressures and daily struggles with health and security. But there needs to be—and, indeed, any thriving metropolitan area must have—a series of promises. Education is one such promise.

In a recent series of "town meetings" with students, faculty, staff, and community members, one instructor told a story about that promise. He said, "The leaven in the world often comes from places that are not materially rich, that are not privileged. And I would like to see City College work toward becoming that leaven, that ...center, immersed in the life of the city, that ...beacon of hope."

All of us need a place that gives us a sense of well being, where we can hope, dream, and achieve—where promises can be realized. We, at Los Angeles City College, urgently want to be that place for our community. That is our vision...to be an urban oasis of learning—a safe haven—that educates minds, opens hearts, and celebrates community.

The importance of having a shared vision cannot be over-emphasized. In the American Council on Education's book Searching for Academic Excellence, the authors identify ten fundamentals of "on-the-move" institutions. The very first fundamental is a strategic mission orientation that is a "well-defined and widely disseminated statement of intention concerning the college's commitment and future direction."

With the ending of our Vision 1995-2001, we have achieved significant progress and are now ready to develop the college's assets and strengths even further. Social constructionist theory maintains we create our world by the conversations we have with one another and by the questions we ask ourselves. In our Strategic Plan 2002-2008, this principle is clearly at work. We have the courage to take prudent risks and the energy to do the hard work required to continue effecting positive change. Our plan for the next six years is an effort to ensure we realize our new vision. We recognize that having a dream—especially one that stretches us—can either be a powerful, shared vision urging us to do better or can be a hollow string of words that mocks reality. As a college community, we have set our sights on creating the nurturing environment we have imagined.

The following pages connect eight institution-wide *priorities* to our vision. These priorities are simply the institutional exercise of "putting first things first." The priorities, in turn, lead to a set of *strategies* that identify specific actionable efforts that we, as an institution, are determined to pursue. We then describe a series of *intended outcomes* that purposefully tie our priorities and strategies to the vision. We are also committed to creating a system of continuous improvement and public accountability by enumerating a series of vital signs to provide feedback on the effectiveness of our strategies. These *vital signs* enable us to check performance against expectations and make adjustments throughout the institution so we move in the same direction. Disseminating our progress widely in the annual *State of the College Report* will complete the planning, acting, and checking cycle of our efforts over the next six years.

> **"I find the great thing in this world is not so much where we stand as in what direction we are moving."** —*GOETHE*

The depth of our commitment is contained in this broad challenge we place before ourselves: Los Angeles City College now ranks 45th nationally in the number of degrees granted to minorities. By the year 2008, we will rank in the top ten.

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PRIORITY 1

Foster a culture of academic excellence by systematically strengthening the educational program and the quality of teaching that lead directly to greater student success.

STRATEGIES

1.1 Develop and implement a new educational master plan that focuses on enhancing the academic enterprise of the core campus.

1.2 Develop new programs that are responsive to student, industry, and four-year institution needs.

1.3 Develop, implement, and communicate a comprehensive matrix of sequential courses to satisfy transfer requirements.

1.4 Investigate the key factors associated with excellence in teaching and learning; identify a philosophy, implement an approach, and deploy a series of "best practices."

1.5 Advance the use of technology in instruction with a specific focus on improved student learning outcomes.

INTENDED OUTCOMES

- Students will be able to choose among a large number of high quality academic programs.
- Faculty members will have the means and motivation to enhance their teaching skills and positively impact student learning.
- Faculty members will be increasingly competent in the use of various technologies to advance the rate of student learning; students will be increasingly competent in the use of technology to access information and advance their own knowledge development.
- Business and industry will seek out our students because of the competencies they acquire at Los Angeles City College.
- Four-year institutions (and articulated programs) will seek out our students because the skills they acquire at Los Angeles City College guarantee their success at higher learning.

VITAL SIGNS

- Degree to which faculty, staff, and administrators believe the college is making progress in achieving a culture of academic excellence *(Campus Climate Survey)*.
- Percentage of students who choose to attend this college because of specific academic programs *(Student Survey)*.
- Number of new academic courses and programs offered (Curriculum Review Committee).
- Percentage of students that find "class teaching styles" to be an obstacle in reaching their educational goals *(Student Survey)*.
- Number of degrees and certificates awarded (Partnership for Excellence).
- Number of transfers to UC and CSU institutions (Partnership for Excellence).
- Percentage of faculty members who are satisfied with the "Access to adequate training about computers and technology necessary to do my job" *(Campus Climate Survey)*.

Traditionally, the topic of quality or excellence in higher education has often been seen as a transcendent phenomenon—that is, "we know it when we see it." Our first priority recognizes that such an attitude is no longer acceptable to society in general and to our many stakeholders. We don't have excellence in education just because we say we do. Instead, we must view quality or excellence as something that results from a series of actions that we take in our organizations. In a town meeting, one administrator said it well: "Educational excellence should be our focus, but we need to acknowledge that there is a whole bunch that goes into that. Saying it won't make it happen."

We also know that the idea of "educational excellence" has two dimensions: the academic program and individual instruction. This has been confirmed by our student survey data that show "specific education program(s)" and "reputation for good teaching" are key reasons that a student enrolls at Los Angeles City College.

The emphasis on academic programs is critical. But, again, "Saying it won't make it happen." Our institution has many excellent programs. Some, such as the Theatre Academy, Child Development, and City of Angels, are highly visible with strong reputations; others, such as Math, are bringing in major grants to develop new curricula and purchase leading-edge equipment; and still others, such as Dental Technology, have developed critical partnerships with prestigious four-year institutions and/or with industry. However, a staff member observed, "We have some wonderful programs, but they are isolated rather than integrated." So, our task is clear: to strengthen systematically the academic programs. We will need to do a better job of developing courses that combine theory and practice. They also need to link in a cohesive way such that graduates have the competencies necessary to compete in the marketplace or as they further their education.

Improving teaching—the individual act of instruction—is also a priority for us. The Little Hoover Commission's (an independent state oversight agency) recent report, "Open Doors and Open Minds: Improving Access and Quality in California's Community Colleges," concluded, "insufficient attention is given to the quality of teaching." We agree. As one faculty member said, "At the end of the day, the critical thing is when faculty members and students interact."

Each teacher must be able to set high expectations and articulate clear outcomes that engage students in active learning through a range of teaching methods. Faculty members are engaging students this way on our campus. "I had a French professor here that I will never forget in my life," said one student. "Instead of lecturing to us for a full class, she would tell us wonderful stories about French writers. A certain day she would speak about and read from a French poet who was born that day. She was unique." Should this be a unique anecdote? No it should not. Again, the issue is developing a methodology for systematically strengthening teaching . . . and learning. As one faculty member commented, "There is little institution-wide commitment to improving teaching. It is fragmented and isolated. There is no cohesive philosophy or expectation that drives improvement." As part of a broad intellectual revitalization effort, we need to celebrate good teaching; we need to commit to educating our educators; we need to embrace a method for doing what we say we will do in our vision statement . . . "educate minds."

Finally, we cannot ignore the role of technology. In the college's previous plan (1995-2001), we stated that "creating an electronic campus" was a key goal. We have accomplished that goal. Every member of the college community has access to a computer and the Internet. We have a state-of-the-art telephone system, e-mail, and a wide array of software in 36 computer labs. Indeed, more than 80% of our students "agree" or "strongly agree" with the statement, "Computers are available for use on campus when I need them" *(LACC Student Survey, 2000)*. Now the challenge—both nationally and on our campus—has shifted. According to *Campus Computing 2001*, a national survey of computing and information technology in American higher education, "Assisting faculty efforts to integrate IT into instruction" is the single most important IT issue. Still, we need to be clear in our intentions. We do not aspire to be one of the "most wired" campuses in the country. Our priority is more in line with that of Yolanda Moses, the American Association for Higher Education's president. She recently put technology in what we believe is the appropriate context by asking the following question: "What is it that I want students to know, and how can technology be used to enhance that goal?"

> **"At the end of the day, the critical thing is when faculty members and students interact."** — *FACULTY MEMBER*

PRIORITY 2

Maintain and enhance a safe, aesthetically pleasing campus environment that encourages involvement, nurtures community, and leads to student success.

STRATEGIES

2.1 Create a new facilities master plan that directs improvements over the next ten years.

2.2 Develop a series of plans: capital improvement plan, hazardous substance removal plan, ADA compliance plan, safety plan, and emergency plan.

2.3 Create opportunities for increased social interaction, especially food service, events, and college-wide gathering places.

2.4 Provide a cleaner work environment, especially in rest room areas.

INTENDED OUTCOMES

- Students and faculty members will spend more time on campus because they find it to be a secure and appealing place to eat, socialize, and exchange ideas.
- Community members will value Los Angeles City College both as an educational asset and as a safe, inviting place to visit for a wide range of events.
- Faculty, staff and students will develop a greater sense of community through more meaningful interactions.

VITAL SIGNS

- Degree to which faculty, staff, and administrators believe the college is making progress in achieving a safe, aesthetically pleasing campus environment that encourages involvement, community, and student success (*Campus Climate Survey*).
- Percentage of students who spend "no time" on campus outside of class/ lab time (*Student Survey*).
- Percentage of students who are satisfied with campus facilities *(Student Survey)*.

An oasis is first and foremost a place—a place that revives and provides sustenance. It is a refuge that is inviting. Our 48-acre campus dates back to the 1920s with many buildings having been built in the 1960s and 1970s and the most modern building having been constructed in 1981. The 15 years between then and the mid-1990s were not kind. With a huge backlog of capital construction at the state level and a trickle of scheduled maintenance dollars coming to the campus, the buildings and their surroundings slowly, inexorably deteriorated. The result was there for all of us—students, faculty, staff, and visitors—to see: cracked sidewalks, dingy classrooms, leaky roofs, and peeling paint. It was a tired-looking campus.

Through a consistent, committed effort on the part of many, the campus environment in the intervening years has yielded grudging but steady change. For example, while issues related to the physical environment such as "the cleanliness of your work environment" and "LACC's physical resources (e.g., facilities, equipment)" were least satisfying to the respondents in our *2001 Campus Climate Survey*, they were also the areas that showed the greatest overall improvement from the 1999 survey. Still, more work needs to be done.

> **"The real reason that the campus environment is so important is because it says something about whether we care. If you are striving for excellence it shows the pride that you have in your place of work."** — *FACULTY MEMBER*

The physical environment provoked a great deal of conversation in our town meetings. Our faculty, staff, and students expressed an array of concerns that focused on the incongruity between what we want to become and what we are now. "Appearance-wise, this place is anything but a sanctuary or a safe haven," observed a faculty member. Such observations included specific concerns over graffiti, trash, lighting, and the perimeter of the campus. "Appearances" are also a problem because they lead people to make inferences about the campus beyond simply that "we don't care." All of the college's crime statistics reinforce the notion that Los Angeles City College is a remarkably safe place, yet many people do not feel safe and secure here. Perception is their reality.

Another critical dimension of this priority involves not so much the facilities themselves but the effect that particular facilities can have on a community. Facilities can help us "celebrate community" by providing the space for us to socialize. Students in our town meetings talked about "places to hang out" while the faculty and staff used terms like "crystallization points." The bottom line, as one staff member pointed out, is, "We don't have very good mechanisms in place to come together and feel as though we are part of a larger whole." She went on to state, sadly, "For most people, there is no LACC. There are classes, sure, and there are offices and departments, but there is no sense of community."

Why is this sense of community so important to us? It actually goes beyond any sort of "feel good" reason. We understand that many of our students are not traditional college students. They are older. They have jobs and families. Still, we know that the research on learning is unequivocal: students who are actively involved in out-of-class activities gain more from their college experience than those who are not so involved. When asked the question, "Outside of class/lab time, how many hours a week do you spend on campus?," more than one-third of our students answer, "none" *(Student Survey, 2000)*. Six in ten "rarely or never" attend campus events (sports, music, theatre) or otherwise participate in student services, and an equal percentage "rarely or never" meet with instructors outside of class to discuss matters. A student wryly said, "If you want to hang out, you have to go across the street to Jack-in-the-Box."

It also needs to be stressed that this lack of community is not just a student problem. A faculty member said, "There is this us-versus-them mentality here. We need to become part of something larger than ourselves." Creating such an environment requires places where people –students, faculty, staff, students, community members—can meet and share ideas. Certainly an institution that is among the most diverse colleges in the country should create the space required to facilitate the social integration of diverse groups. Unfortunately, our campus does not bring us together. It either keeps us apart or unintentionally encourages us to hurry along to our next destination. That is not who we want to be or what we intend to become. That is not an oasis.

According to one staff member, "This campus needs a center where people can come together. If you have a place where people can get out of their context and are able to interact with others, you have the ability to create a sense of community." We now have reason to believe we can convert our intentions into reality. With the passage of Proposition A in April of 2001, the college has an initial down payment of $147 million to revitalize the infrastructure of the campus over the next eight years. It is an investment of both dollars and hope that we must convert into a new, dynamic learning environment for our community. It can be our legacy to a future generation of students.

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PRIORITY 3

Expand and strengthen partnerships with business, industry, educational institutions, neighborhood groups, and regional associations.

STRATEGIES

3.1 Convene a summit of elected officials and community leaders to identify unmet needs and develop collaborative responses to those needs.

3.2 Improve and extend the use of advisory boards as a means to revitalize academic programs, ensure currency, and facilitate resource development efforts.

3.3 Create a series of satellite campuses that bring the college's entry-level programs and services to communities within our service area.

INTENDED OUTCOMES

- Business and industry will view Los Angeles City College programs as being innovative and our graduates as having the requisite competencies to succeed in the workplace.
- Feeder high schools and middle schools will want to work with us.
- Colleges will seek out our students.
- Community members will use our facilities for events and engage us in joint college/community-based-organization efforts.

VITAL SIGNS

- Degree to which faculty, staff, and administrators believe the college is making progress in expanding and strengthening its partnerships (*Campus Climate Survey*).
- Number of successful completions in vocational programs (Partnership for Excellence).
- Number of requests for use of campus facilities (Civic Center Permit Log).
- Percentage of total instructional hours that is delivered from off-campus sites (Office of Institutional Effectiveness).

Community colleges have always had at least one advantage over more traditional four-year colleges and universities. Baccalaureate institutions are often accused of operating as "closed systems"—i.e., teaching and conducting research on topics that matter most to them with "ivy-covered walls" acting as very real barriers between the institutions and the society within which they operate. Community colleges are closer to the action and, consequently, more responsive to the needs of their communities. As a community college, we are, as sociologist Amitai Etzioni has described, "part of the encompassing structure of the community." Los Angeles City College is just such a social institution, and it exists beyond a set of buildings or even a group of people.

The college seeks to strengthen its relationship with three stakeholder groups: business and industry, educational institutions, and community groups. In 1996, the state legislature officially added "economic development" as another component of the mission of community colleges. Recently, Los Angeles City College followed the lead of the California Community College system by amending its mission to affirm our role as a primary provider in fulfilling the vocational education and training needs of California business and industry. But we need to extend our reach. While we are the key provider of continuing education for the Los Angeles Police Department and have recently entered into partnerships with Kaiser Permanente, Queen of Angels-Hollywood Presbyterian Medical Center, and Childrens Hospital to support our new nursing program, we simply cannot ignore a startling fact: Los Angeles County is the world's 18th largest economy in the world. It has a gross domestic product of $285 billion, larger than the economies of Switzerland, Belgium, Sweden, and Austria. That fact inspires us to redouble our efforts to make stronger connections with the business community.

We also need to acknowledge and act upon another role that we play as a linchpin between two other education enterprises: high schools and baccalaureate institutions. High schools are one of our most important suppliers. Their seniors become our freshmen. Working with high schools is crucial because we know that the easiest way to improve any system output is to improve its input. Preparedness is key. As one faculty member noted, "It's the range of talent that's the challenge. Some students are eager and prepared, others are fresh out of high school and they don't know a thing, including why they are here." The more "prepared to learn" that students are, the more learning will necessarily take place. To the degree that we, as an institution, are willing to work "upstream" with our feeder high schools by communicating our expectations and facilitating students' transition to college, the better off we will be. Concurrently, we need to recognize that we play the role of supplier or feeder to four-year institutions who are "downstream" from us. Their concerns with us mimic ours with high schools. We need to work with them to understand their requirements and produce graduates who have the requisite skills to succeed at the next level.

A final stakeholder group is the neighborhood community itself. Our recent purchase of the historic Van de Kamp Bakery as a future satellite campus is a singular example of how partnerships should be developed. With the help of state and local elected officials, a well-organized and enthusiastic coalition of 20 community-based organizations, and the support of District leadership, the college is designing an exciting new educational center for northeast Los Angeles.

Many of the individuals in our town meetings reinforced this sentiment that we need to do more to strengthen our connection with our community. A faculty emeritus commented: "The community is one of our biggest allies but we usually see things in terms of what they can do for us, not what we can do for them." While we have worked with many elected officials—state assembly members, state senators, city council members, and so on—we too often take our neighbors and community-based organizations for granted. Perhaps they take us for granted as well. Such passivity does not lend itself to what we are trying to create: an exhilarating force, a powerful shared vision that " . . . opens hearts and celebrates community." Establishing this connection, we will, as one staff member observed, " ...become the thing that our community treasures most."

> **"Students are part of our neighborhood, so the neighborhood should be part of our college."** — *STAFF MEMBER*

PRIORITY 4

Create a student-centered learning environment that focuses on students' needs and reduces the barriers to their success.

STRATEGIES

4.1 Reevaluate the effective and efficient delivery of counseling services and administrative services in support of student success.

4.2 Design a comprehensive system that includes a widespread, early intervention strategy that focuses on student success skills.

4.3 Develop and implement a new, comprehensive approach to addressing the needs of students who are unable to perform college-level work.

4.4 Identify critical student services work processes and redesign them to be simple, effective, and both student and staff friendly.

4.5 Investigate and identify the causes of "unsuccessful" course completion and implement a comprehensive series of remedies.

INTENDED OUTCOMES

- Students will be increasingly likely to gain access to college and complete their courses successfully because a broad array of barriers has been removed.
- Students will be increasingly likely to have a positive college experience because they were given the tools and the motivation to succeed.
- Staff and administration will be empowered to work together to identify opportunities to continuously improve the efficiency and effectiveness of student services work processes.
- Faculty members will define their work in terms of student success.

VITAL SIGNS

- Degree to which faculty, staff, and administrators believe the college is making progress in creating a student-centered learning environment (*Campus Climate Survey*).
- Rate of overall successful course completion (Partnership for Excellence and USC Diversity Scorecard).
- Number of students completing coursework at least one level above their prior basic skills enrollment (Partnership for Excellence).
- Percentage of newly-enrolled students who take one or more classes within a year (Title V: Seamless Entry).

The Little Hoover Commission's report Open Doors and Open Minds states, "While the community colleges are touted as providing educational opportunities for all, they are operated in ways that limit access—and as a result, diminish the benefits to Californians." The report mentions such examples as classes offered at times convenient for instructors but not students, semester-based scheduling that discourages working adults from enrolling, limited counseling and outreach efforts, and so on. Our most recent student survey results tell us that job obligations, financial factors, and family obligations are the top obstacles that students face (Student Survey, 2000). Some of these barriers we can help with: scheduling classes creatively, making financial aid and scholarships readily available, and providing child care and various counseling services. Other barriers described—"cannot get classes I need," "class teaching styles," "lack of study skills," "student support services," and "college rules and regulations"—are also challenges that are within our ability to influence.

These barriers were affirmed in our town meetings by the voices of our faculty, staff, and, most importantly, our students. "I have students in my course that have never seen a counselor," said one faculty member. A staff member commented, "It isn't our people. We try. It is these antiquated work procedures."

And students weighed in: "This campus is student unfriendly. The enrollment procedure is nuts. Stand in this line, stand in that line, come back tomorrow." Another student said, "The students are not put first here...at any level." We can do better. It will require more than a smile. It will require hard work and a large dose of empathy to put ourselves in the shoes of students. It will require us to listen, then act.

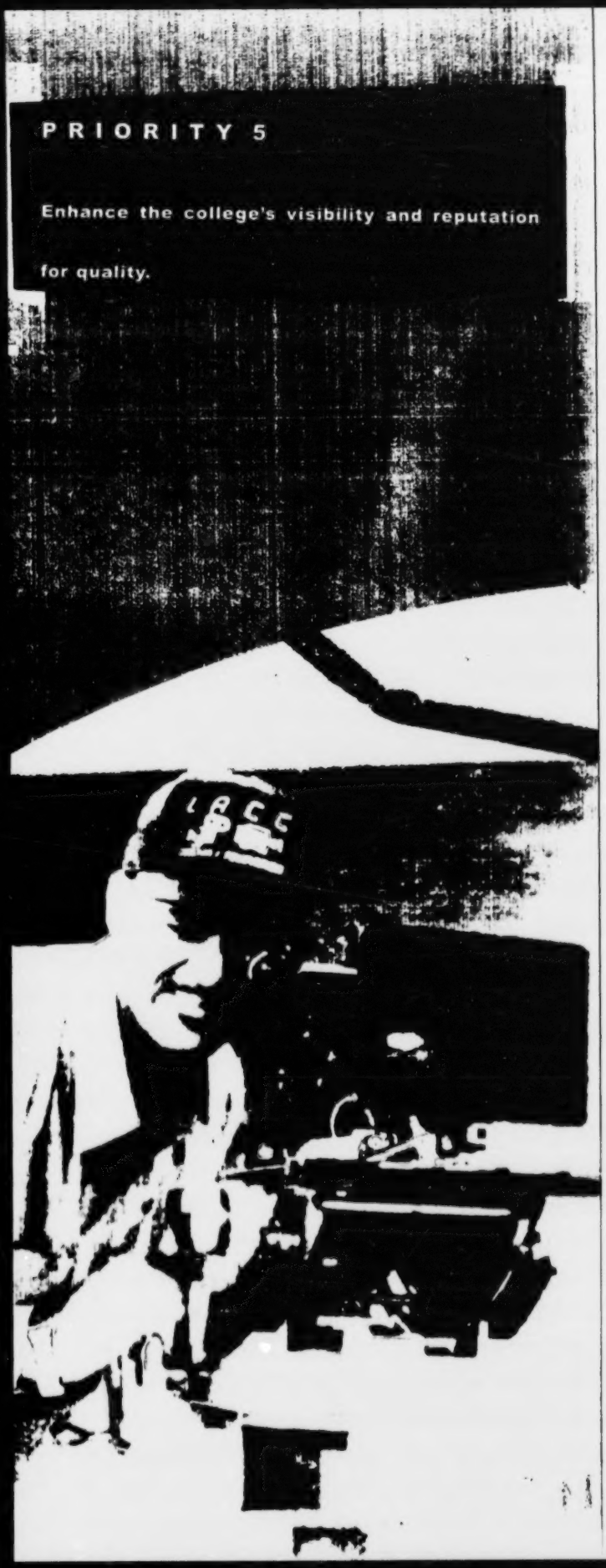
> **"The question that we should be asking ourselves — in every single instance— is, 'How does this benefit the student?'"** — *ADMINISTRATOR*

Our new one-stop Student Admissions Center is an example. The vision is to create a seamless entry process that simplifies what can be a dizzying array of steps, offices, forms, and lines for an entering student. Working with staff user groups in admissions, financial aid, counseling, and other offices (and with a federal grant and Prop A funds), we are designing a student-centered entry process that will be housed in a new student-centered building. It will be the first new building on our campus in almost 25 years.

"Excellence comes from us meeting the needs of the students without them having to ask for it," observed one administrator. We also need to acknowledge and respond to an even more challenging dynamic when it comes to our students. *Measuring Up 2000*, a state-by-state report card on higher education, grades each state on a series of factors including affordability, participation, and preparation. California received an "A" on affordability, largely due to the "exceptionally low tuition at . . . community colleges." That, in part, explains a "B+" for participation—"a fairly good proportion of students in California go on to college immediately after high school." The challenge is associated with the third factor. Preparation is graded at "C-" because of California high school students' poor performance on national assessments of math, reading, and writing. Los Angeles City College is at the front line of this battle. Our Fall 2001 placement data show that only 49% of incoming students test into college-level English. The math scores are even worse: only 3% test into college-level math.

This problem of under preparation cannot be ignored. To their credit, faculty members in the town meetings recognized the severity of the problem and expressed their heartfelt desire to help. "There really is no such thing as remedial education," said an impassioned faculty member. "You take a person wherever they are. You do that by recognizing their strengths and giving them strategies to deal with their weaknesses." And she concluded by saying, "You can't save people, you can't rescue them, but you can point out their strengths and help them believe in themselves." An instructor in the Learning Skills area commented, "Anybody can walk in here. Without what we provide, these people would not have any chance because they are not qualified to do anything. That is what everybody needs...a chance." That fact is that we have an awful lot of students who need an awful lot of help.

Perhaps the most fundamental challenge is how we view ourselves as an institution. George Washington Carver may have said it best, "Start where you are with what you've got and go as far as you can." Our role is to be that place that provides a chance—a lighthouse in a sea of struggles and life difficulties. "It's amazing to me the number of students that I see who come here believing that they aren't smart enough or are 'too barrio' to make it," is how one staff member expressed it. We can, as an institution, create a self-fulfilling prophecy by believing in and respecting our students so they begin to believe in and respect themselves. One of our students explained, "Even though many of the students pay little or, in some cases, nothing to go to school here, the college should be striving to treat them as if they were attending an Ivy League school, paying tens of thousands of dollars in tuition." Such respect and treatment on our part will help drive out the inferiority that many feel. In doing so, they will feel important, valued, and empowered to learn and succeed.



PRIORITY 5

Enhance the college's visibility and reputation for quality.

STRATEGIES

5.1 Research the issue of quality as it relates to student success and implement a systematic approach to helping students reach their educational goals.

5.2 Develop and implement a comprehensive marketing plan that identifies target markets and needs and matches those needs with specific educational programs and student services.

5.3 Develop a consistent design element that ties all of the college's communications vehicles together with a full range of collateral materials—class schedule, catalogue, web pages, brochures, and so on—that inform and direct.

5.4 Develop activities that enhance the college's reputation as a center of intellectual and artistic achievement.

INTENDED OUTCOMES

- Students want to learn here; instructors want to teach here; staff and administrators want to work here; and community members want to visit here.
- Los Angeles residents (community members; elected officials; future, current and former students), as well as regional, state, and national groups are aware of Los Angeles City College and have a positive attitude about the institution.
- As our reputation improves, our access to resources also improves.

VITAL SIGNS

- Degree to which faculty, staff, and administrators believe the college is making progress in enhancing its visibility and reputation for quality (*Campus Climate Survey*).
- Percentage of students who agree that, "I would encourage others to attend this college" (*Student Survey*).
- Number of times Los Angeles City College is featured in local, state, or national media (Clipping Service).

Los Angeles City College is all about diversity. In addition to having one of the most diverse student populations of any college campus in this country, our students come with a range of reasons for attending the college: to transfer to a 4-year college, to obtain an associate degree, to help choose a career, to train for a first job, to train for a different job, to upgrade job skills, to obtain or maintain a license or certificate, to improve English and/or math skills, or to pursue personal interests. Many colleges and universities have the luxury of specializing by focusing on a particular population and offering targeted services and programs. We do not have that luxury. If nothing, we are all about access...open access.

Open access, however, does not have to equate to lower quality. It is just a matter of how one defines quality or excellence. At many colleges, the focus is on inputs—e.g., SAT scores of the incoming freshman (a measure of selectivity). Other colleges focus on the size of their endowments or on outputs—e.g., the percentage of students who receive a baccalaureate degree within a five-year timeframe. We, as an open access institution, do not have the comfort of using such simplistic approaches. In the previous priority we spoke about the lack of preparation of many of our students. We also noted that, "We need to take students where we find them." As an institution, then, our goal is to develop student potential.

The single best means to develop and communicate quality is through customer satisfaction. This is simply the exercise of identifying students' educational goals, then making daily heroic efforts such that, as an institution, we are able to help them meet or exceed their own expectations. They deserve no less of us; we should expect no less of them. By focusing on the needs of various populations—e.g., transfer, train, advance—we will be able to develop programs and services that respond directly to those needs. What we strive to avoid is what one student commented on: "Sometimes I feel like I am getting lost in the shuffle." Another student sounded a similar call: "I am going to Cal State LA next semester and I have had some terrific teachers here." But she added, "I know I'm not special but I never quite felt that transferring was any big deal to anyone here." We need to change that. We need to make it a big deal.

We also know that one heroic effort is more important than any other in developing talent and, therefore, enhancing institutional quality. In a recent study by Thomas Clery (*Community College Journal*, August-September 2001), he found that "student satisfaction with faculty instruction" and "pass rates on licensure exams" were the dominant measures of quality according to students. To the degree that instructors demonstrate excellence in the classroom, it necessarily follows that talent is developed, goals are reached, expectations are met or exceeded, and quality, through the eyes of the student or stakeholder, is generated.

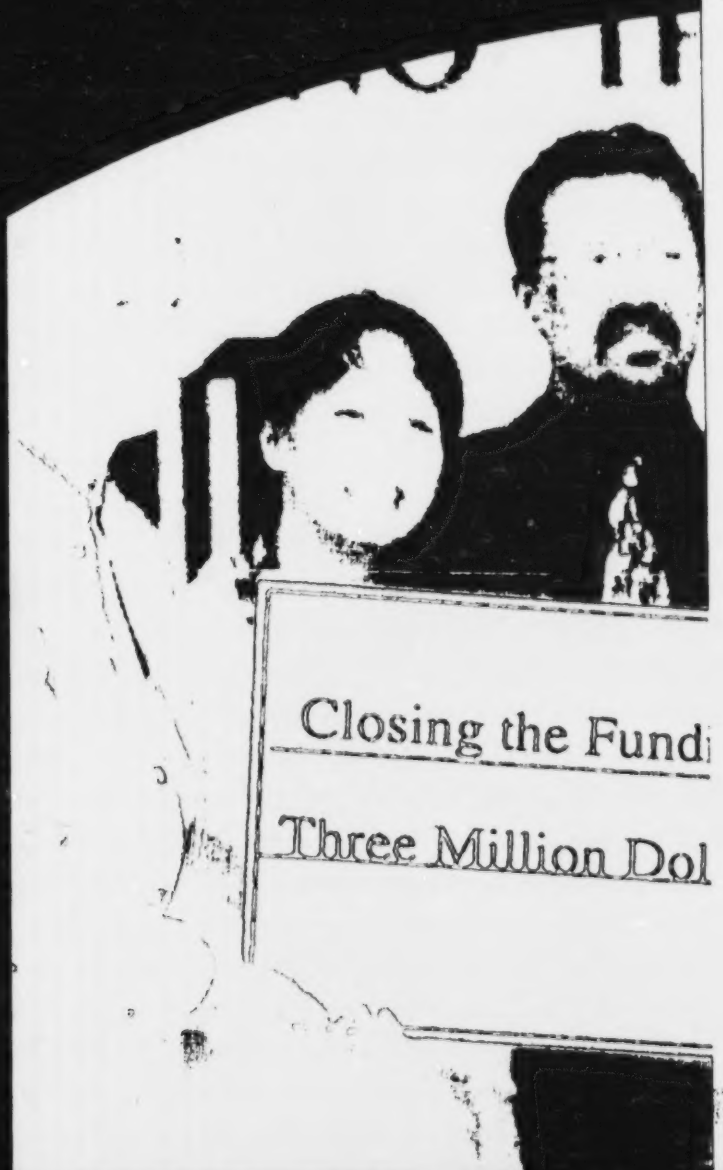
As we begin to deliver on talent development, we should also not be afraid to talk about our achievements. The communication of quality is a self-validating process that enhances pride and self esteem. "I came here in 1972," said one professor. "We had 30,000 students. It was action. You could go from here to Europe and everyone heard of City College. And I was very proud to be a part of this institution. We need to recapture that pride." Another faculty member was more direct in terms of offering a solution: "We need to sell, sell, sell. Celebrate our successes...our graduates who have gone on to greatness. We just don't make a big deal about the real good things."

> **"We have a lot to offer here at this school. I'm just not certain if the community really knows it. We don't tell our story well."** — *FACULTY MEMBER*

Finally, some years ago E. Grady Bogue noted in his book *The Evidence for Quality* (1992), the difference between "head first" versus "heart first" when it came to matters of quality. We, as an institution, are certainly committing ourselves to the "head first" matters in this priority. That is, we are adopting a strategic and unifying vision that "operationalizes" quality as seen through the eyes of our stakeholders. But the final guarantor in realizing the promise of quality is a "heart first" attitude in which, as Bogue describes it, a concern for quality constitutes "the premier leadership call on the attitudes and actions of every person on the campus—from professor to president, from custodian to counselor, from director to dean." If we believe in the promise of quality, every action on campus will serve that promise and be measured by that standard.

PRIORITY 6

Increase the resources available to the college through state and district allocation processes and through extramural development efforts.



STRATEGIES

6.1 Develop and execute a comprehensive resource development plan for the college that includes the Foundation, grants, and business partnerships.

6.2 Develop and execute an enrollment management plan that focuses on both broad enrollment types (e.g., full-time, part-time, basic skills, upper division) as well specific disciplines (e.g., dental technology, psychology, chemistry) and aligns with the state and district's allocation models.

INTENDED OUTCOMES

- Faculty and staff feel as though they have adequate resources needed to do their work.
- Students are exposed to up-to-date equipment and methods both in administrative procedures and in the classroom.
- Administrators are able to creatively leverage additional resources in ways that extend the reach and impact of existing resources.

VITAL SIGNS

- Degree to which faculty, staff, and administrators believe the college is increasing available resources (*Campus Climate Survey*).
- Number and total amount of annual grants received by the college (*LACCD Annual Grants Report*).
- Percent of the Los Angeles Community College District budget that is allocated to Los Angeles City College. (LACC Budget Office)
- Size of the Los Angeles City College Foundation endowment and number of scholarships awarded (*Los Angeles City College Foundation Annual Report*).

It is profoundly telling that in the year 2000, Thomas Nussbaum, the California Community College's chancellor, set a 2005 strategic goal to "bring our funding per student to within $1,500 of the national average." This is our reality - being below average. Meeting this funding goal would require the state to provide California community colleges with overall funding increases averaging 10% per year over a decade. Nothing even close to this amount has ever been provided for any ten-year period in the system's history. This is in a state that also has a crushing demand with a current community college population of 1.6 million. This number is predicted to increase by over 35% by 2010.

This systemic dilemma is not just a numerical exercise being played out in the state house in Sacramento. It plays out every day on our campus in the choices we are forced to make—not between good ideas and not-so-good ideas but between good ideas and other good ideas. As one administrator characterized it, "Our fundamental problem is the lack of resources. You can have the greatest plans in the world but if you don't have the resources you can't get anything done." A professor added, "So many of us have been here for awhile and we have been through a period where we could not get anything...no money, no money, no money...and the most desperate needs went unattended, that a campus culture [of deprivation and victimization] has really taken hold."

And while community colleges in California have been on a starvation diet for an extended period, the last three or four years have not been without some additional discretionary funds—e.g., State Instructional Equipment Funds and Partnership for Excellence. That may not be enough, though, especially given the twin factors we are currently facing. As Patrick Callan, president of the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, recently stated, "It may be the first time in modern history that colleges and universities have had to deal with record growth during an economic downturn."

We have three options. We can choose to live on what we are given, a subsistence diet that provides us with enough to live on but not enough to thrive. This option reinforces a culture of victimization in which we begin to believe we don't deserve better. The college strongly rejects this option. Our students, our college community, deserve better. A second option is to actively attempt to increase both the size of the resource pie and our share of it by understanding and applying the state and district allocation models in our day-to-day decision making. This option needs to be an aspect of this sixth priority. We have a worthy vision—"an urban of oasis of learning." But that safe haven, that beacon of hope to the community, will become a barren, unfulfilled dream unless we find ways to generate additional resources within the allocation process.

> **"Not grant writers, 'opportunity seekers.' We need to teach faculty to be opportunity seekers wherever that takes us."** — *FACULTY MEMBER*

A third option is to expand the reach of resource development efforts into extramural areas—grants, business partnerships, private fund-raising, and foundation activities. We have been relatively successful in the last few years attracting a series of large federal grants. They are providing significant benefits in math and student services, benefits that simply would not have been forthcoming within the existing allocation model. But these efforts are not enough. We need to create more comprehensive resource development that extends our capabilities into other areas. We need to pursue private as well as federal grants. We need to strengthen the Los Angeles City College Foundation and expand its capacity to pursue major gifts and alumni donations.

We choose to pursue both the second and third options with equal zeal. We choose to shift from a culture of acceptance and passivity that is populated with victims, to one of entrepreneurship and pro-activity that embraces and celebrates "opportunity seekers."

The leadership here must come from the college's administration. Indeed, an administrator in our town meetings was quite eloquent on this matter. He said, "Faculty have a responsibility to be current and enthusiastic. Students have a responsibility to come prepared to learn, to be honest, and faithful in their efforts." Completing the thought, he added, "Staff have a responsibility to support learning and administrators are responsible for ensuring that everyone has what they need to be successful."

PRIORITY 7

Develop and implement plans to enhance the efficient allocation of resources that support the college's vision and priorities.

STRATEGIES

7.1 Develop and implement a master planning process that links planning and budgeting.

7.2 Develop the institution's capacity to reallocate scarce resources.

INTENDED OUTCOMES

- Institutional priorities will be funded such that the vision of the college will be realized.
- Departments that enumerate and realize goals that align with institutional priorities and strategies will receive the needed resources to thrive.
- New areas of excellence will emerge.
- The college's visibility and reputation for quality will increase as areas of excellence emerge due to the alignment of planning and budgeting.

VITAL SIGNS

- Degree to which faculty, staff, and administrators believe the college is efficiently allocating its resources (*Campus Climate Survey*).
- Budget dollars per full time equivalent (LACC Budget Office).
- Percentage of college community that believes the college's budgeting process meets the needs of the institution (*Campus Climate Survey*).

While there is a glaring need for added resources, there is also an accompanying issue that is best described by a recent California Citizens Commission on Higher Education report (1999), *Toward a State of Learning*, that states, "Currently entangled in various internal contradictions and structural inefficiencies, the community colleges can only respond effectively to Tidal Wave II if their structure is made simpler and more efficient, the tangle of state regulation over them is reduced, and their accountability is clearer." In effect, the report's commissioners recognize that simply adding more money is rarely the answer.

In May 2001, Los Angeles City College conducted a two-day workshop on "Linking Planning and Budgeting" that was facilitated by the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS). There were two "key learnings" that resulted from this dialogue. First, and most importantly, "In the absence of a plan that is linked to the budget, the budget is the plan." This is an unspoken reality. Most organizations have a strategic plan. That plan, like ours, involves making decisions about organizational priorities that specify what changes in intentions, competencies, or behaviors the organization will pursue. But if planning is fundamentally a change process, it is not good enough to merely identify priorities without aligning those priorities with a vision, with a series of strategies, and with the intentional investment of resources. In effect, linking planning and budgeting brings intentional direction to what is otherwise unintentional change.

> **"The things that we invest our time, energy, and limited resources in have to be things that advance the institution in a purposeful way."** — *ADMINISTRATOR*

Our campus community members believe we can improve here. In our recent *Campus Climate Survey* (2001), respondents agreed that fiscal management was important, but they were not satisfied that "LACC's budgeting process meets the needs of the institution." Without knowing the intimacies of either budgeting or planning, some town meeting members also expressed beliefs that appear to be a manifestation of our disconnect in planning and budgeting. As one staff member expressed herself, "There doesn't seem to be any urgency to improve. We do things the same way, year in, year out." A student also addressed a certain malaise by saying, "Things are okay. It's a school...nothing special. To be honest, there's nothing here that is particularly exciting." That lack of urgency or "specialness" arises, at least in part, from our failure to create and follow a plan to fund our priorities.

The second key learning was, "There is no such thing as not enough money, just not high enough priority." In effect, once the budget and the plan are linked, the organization has given intentional direction in the form of priorities. Our analysis of the state's pattern and practice of funding community colleges leads us to believe that the California community colleges are significantly under-funded and this sobering reality is unlikely to change in the near future. Knowing that many of our needs are not going to be funded makes it essential that the most critical needs are given the highest priority.

As noted in all of our surveys, Los Angeles City College has made significant strides in many essential areas: cleaning up the campus, furnishing classrooms with new equipment, purchasing computers for faculty members, adding new academic programs, and so on. "There is no doubt that we are doing better now than we have in the past...at least since I've been here. And that is ten years," observed one faculty member. Some part of this improvement has come from new one-time funds such as State Instructional Equipment Funds, and some has come from growth dollars associated with our enrollment increases (19 percent in the last five years). But that is not all of it. We have also improved our understanding of what is truly important. For example, we now conduct a regular campus climate survey of faculty, staff, and administrators. In addition to asking questions about "the cleanliness of your work environment" and "opportunities to interact with students," we also ask the relative importance of each item and the level of satisfaction the respondent has to the item. This information has become a strategic tool in the form of a Resource Optimization Matrix. Those items noted as being of high importance to the campus community and yet derive low levels of satisfaction are clearly "relative weaknesses." These items—from the allocation of scare resources point of view—are where we need to invest.

In effect, we do not have the luxury of making mistakes or being unintentional with our investments. We must continue to work smart; we must continue to make difficult choices.

PRIORITY 8

Collect and use data systematically to make informed decisions that lead to continuous organizational improvement.

STRATEGIES

8.1 Design and implement a system that links assessment results, pre-requisite checking, and placement.

8.2 Improve and extend the program review process college-wide to provide the means for department-based improvement and to inform the budget process.

8.3 Research the issue of student achievement and implement a pilot project for assessing learning in specific disciplines.

8.4 Create and institutionalize an Institutional Research Council that ensures that our data-gathering efforts match key institutional decisions and is responsible for the "vital signs" process of this strategic plan.

8.5 Revise the shared governance document (1998) to reflect a renewed commitment to participative decision making and continuous improvement.

INTENDED OUTCOMES

- Faculty, staff, and administrators believe that institutional decisions are based upon facts and arrived at through a shared governance process.
- The level of trust increases as fact-based decisions replace the perception that decisions are based upon expediency, unrelated events, and internal or external pressures, or that decisions are made with incomplete evidence.
- Faculty, staff, and administrators embrace the notion of "self-reflection" and evaluation as the means to promote understanding, learning, and improvement.

VITAL SIGNS

- Degree to which faculty, staff, and administrators believe the college is using data to make informed decisions (*Campus Climate Survey*).
- Degree to which trust exists within the campus community (*Campus Climate Survey*).

One of the most dominant planning assumptions generated from our environmental scanning efforts was, "There will be a continued focus on accountability in higher education." Students and parents want assurance of an adequate return on their investment; donors demand evidence of good stewardship of resources; employers demand graduates who can be successful in today's ever-changing environment; state agencies expect to see tangible measures of mission-related achievements; and the list goes on. The trend is rooted in decreasing confidence in public institutions, in changing priorities for allocating funds, and in the growing national importance of education and training. No one has been excluded from this broad-sweeping indictment of higher education's inability or unwillingness to articulate a system that defines mission and goals and then seeks to monitor progress toward their achievement.

The fact is that colleges and universities do not have a history of being "self-reflective" organizations. Their primary means of ensuring quality has been through the vehicle of accreditation. This exercise involves an every six- or seven-year cycle that provokes a flurry of activity to meet a long list of minimum standards. It is an externally driven accountability exercise.

> **"Evaluation is the key to academic excellence."** — *ADMINISTRATOR*

What we intend is to embrace evaluation and assessment not as a means to meet external demands for accountability but as a tool to help us meet our internal responsibility for continuous improvement and organizational learning. We need to develop a "culture of evidence" that eschews anecdotes for facts and that provides the feedback necessary to learn and grow. As such, we need to apply the definition of learning used by some learning theorists — "error detection and correction" — to pursue a methodology of renewal.

By focusing on learning, as opposed to accountability, we will be able to systematically expand our ability to identify and produce the results we truly want. While few individuals in our town meetings used the precise language of "systematic collection and use of data" to improve organizational learning, their conversations were replete with references to assessing performance. Four areas are of particular importance to the college: assessment for placement, student learning outcomes, program review, and strategic planning.

There is a huge frustration associated with the college's inability to assess and place students in the proper classes and to enforce a pre-requisite checking process. A professor noted, "Teachers are there to teach. We place an additional burden on the teacher when we ask him or her to identify who should and should not be in the class." The college has recently converted to Accuplacer, an online assessment software application. Still, the range of incoming talent is so broad—from individuals who are struggling to obtain basic skills in math and English to students who are on a fast track to transfer to UC Berkeley. Much more needs to be done.

Since the mid-1980's, student learning outcomes have become a national force in gauging the effectiveness of institutions of higher education. In a recent *League for Innovation* article by Hjelm and Baker (Vol. 4, No. 3, 2001) the authors conclude, "An expanding number of constituencies, including students, faculty, administrators, and board members, expect institutions to provide evidence of achievement of explicit student outcomes." Frequently, that evidence takes the form of data derived from an assessment of student learning. According to the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC), "Assessment of student learning outcomes, an ongoing process aimed at understanding and improving student learning, involves making explicit and public what the criteria for learning are. It also involves gathering, analyzing, and interpreting evidence and using that evidence for institutional improvement." As a college, we need to begin investigating what happens to students' knowledge, skills, and beliefs, as a result of attending our institution. We need to understand how Los Angeles City College has changed them.

We also need to rededicate ourselves to program review as a methodology for renewal. An administrator commented, "I realize it is easier not to do it but too many programs are just sliding along." She added, "We need something that evaluates and adjusts things based upon that evaluation." Unfortunately, some programs have slid along because the process that assessed them and provided them with information for improvement slid along as well. A faculty member said, "Program review is an example of how we could be managing improvement but we just made it meaningless, useless, and a waste of time." In the past year, the Educational Planning Committee has piloted a new approach to academic program review that involves an annual, bi-annual, and six-year review process. It is data driven. The key will be to not only collect the data but also use the resulting information to drive improvement and the effective allocation of scarce resources by tying it closely to the budgeting process.

The last area of evaluation we will focus on is the strategic planning process. Throughout this document we have identified "vital signs" for each priority. Their purpose is to answer the question, "How will we know if we are successful?" We ask this question because we know that every journey is not a line, straight and unbroken. There are deadends, dangerous curves, and switchbacks. There will be errors that require detection and correction. So, like any seasoned traveler, we will need a series of milestones that provide us feedback on our pathway to becoming an "urban oasis of learning."

CREATING THE PLAN

VISIONING TEAM

A direction-setting team focused on developing a new, powerful, shared vision—our destiny. Working together, this team of faculty, staff, administrators, and students crafted a new aspiration for our college. They both asked and answered the question: "What are we trying to create?"

TOWN MEETINGS

Ten town meetings were held at which individuals were asked to reflect on the new draft vision statement and the challenges associated with making that vision a reality— How do we get there?

ASSUMPTIONS

Economic, demographic, educational, public policy, societal, and technology issues provided the data to frame our planning assumptions.

VISIONING TEAM PARTICIPANTS

Team Leader, Daniel Seymour, Administration

Mary Carr, Staff

Gary Colombo, Faculty

Maryanne Des Vignes, Faculty

Henry Ealy, Faculty

Roberta Holt, Faculty

Jackie Ireland, Administration

Reri Pumphrey, Staff

Robin Robinson, Staff

Myra Siegel, Administration

Mary Spangler, Administration

Daniel Stackpole, Student

Art Tyler, Administration

Rebecca Tillberg, Administration

George Vassilev, Student

Lillian Yamaoka, Faculty

TOWN MEETING PARTICIPANTS

Facilitator: Daniel Seymour, Administration

Meeting 1
Merrill Eastcott, Administration; Carmen Ilano, Staff; Thomas Lee, Staff; Norman Mennes, Emeritus; Matilde Parente, Student; Mary Sanchez, Staff; Silvia Vidales, Staff; Leanna Watts, Administration

Meeting 2
Judy Keropian, Staff ; Susan Matranga, Faculty; Ethel McClatchey, Emeritus; Pamela Moss, Student; Damian Nevarez, Staff; Gayle Partlow, Faculty; Anne Walsh, Student

Meeting 3
Ahmad Arfaania, Student; Raymond Badalian, Faculty; Aaron Brown, Faculty; Peter Franta, Faculty; Marty Jaffee, Faculty; April Keseric, Student; Ray Hicks, Staff; Iris Magee, Faculty; Robert Mardirosian, Faculty; Nancy Washburn, Faculty; Harvey Williams, Staff; Korla Williams, Staff

Meeting 4
Gloria Bohanon, Faculty; Arutyun Chefteyan, Student; Bridgette Ford, Student; Elaine Geismar, Staff; Rosalind Goddard, Faculty; Luther Gynes, Faculty; Arnold McMahon, Faculty; Betsy Regalado, Admin.; Alma Salazar, Staff; Jose Sales, Staff; Oswaldo Tapia, Student; Theresa Turner, Staff; Amador Uribe, Staff

Meeting 5
Elaine Carter, Faculty; Anna Cheshmedzhyan, Staff; Tom Cook, Faculty; Rebecca Tillberg, Admin.; Heather Stachelrodt, Student; George Vassilev, Student

Meeting 6
Tom Cano, Faculty; Caquese Chaffin, Emeritus; Dana Cohen, Faculty; Maria Li, Staff ; Maggie Lopez, Staff; Pacita Salunga, Staff; Shauna Santos, Student; Karen Williamson, Staff; Cathy Wixon, Administration

Meeting 7
Adeniyi Adeleye, Faculty; Barbara Basney, Student; Ren Colantoni, Faculty; Norma de la Pena, Instructor; Tsuyoshi Osumi, Faculty; Willie Richmond, Administration; Willard Scott, Staff

Meeting 8
Joyce Allen, Faculty; Gladys Cano, Staff; Isabella Chung, Staff; Erica Johnson, Staff; Elizabeth Keller, Faculty; Ken Lanzer, Faculty; Joyce Moore, Administration; Reri Pumphrey, Staff; Martha Sklar, Administration

Meeting 9
Chuck Ake, Staff; Gigi Chamizo, Staff; Nikki Gluck, Staff; Margit Haut, Student; Ken Sherwood, Faculty; Fleur Steinhardt, Faculty; Barbara Vasquez, Faculty

Meeting 10
Dorothy Fuhrmann, Faculty; Miryam Jannol, Faculty; Boris Lopez, Faculty; Melody Meldrum, Staff; Cynthia Nalls, Staff; Denise O'Dell, Staff; Renee Randolph, Staff; Tammy Robinson, Faculty

This document was reviewed and approved by the Eduational Planning Committee, the Academic Senate, and the Shared Governance Council.

PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS

Economic

Assume that a change in basic industries will affect employment and income opportunities in Los Angeles with manufacturing continuing to decline and entertainment, health, education, retail trade, and business services on the rise. *(2000-2004 California State Plan for Vocational and Technical Education)*

Assume that five of the top ten occupations (retail sales, guards, waiters, food preparation workers, and cashiers) in number of new jobs pay less than poverty level wages. *(United Way, A Tale of Two Cities: Promise and Peril in Los Angeles, 1999)*

Assume that Los Angeles is the nation's poverty capital with the largest number of poor of any metropolitan area; at the same time, it has more high-income households than any other state in the nation. *(American Dream Makers: Facts and Figures about L.A.'s Latino Emerging Majority, United Way, 2000)*

Assume that California is facing another round of fiscal difficulty, one brought on by high energy prices, an ailing technology industry, and a foundering national economy (that coincides with the onset of a tidal wave of additional students). *(Competition and Collaboration in California Higher Education, The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, 2002, Kathy Reeves Bracco and Patrick M. Callan)*

Assume that state, various political agencies, and numerous studies and reports have reaffirmed the community colleges' role as primary providers in fulfilling the vocational education and training needs of California business and industry. *(Toward a State of Learning, California Higher Education for the Twenty-First Century, California Citizens Commission on Higher Education, 1999)*

Assume that traditional jobs, a pre-designed slot with a specific set of duties performed repeatedly, will be replaced by jobs in which employees will handle diverse responsibilities; they will operate within rapidly changing organizations and partnerships; they will have to be creative and innovative; and they will constantly use technology to increase productivity. *(Toward a State of Learning, California Higher Education for the Twenty-First Century, California Citizens Commission on Higher Education, 1999)*

Assume that employers are focusing on skills vs. degrees with this new set of skills blending what traditionally have been separate academic and vocational competencies. *(2000-2004 California State Plan for Vocational and Technical Education)*

Assume that one-career careers will be replaced by many-career careers with community colleges being the largest providers of workforce education. *(Facing the Millennium: California Community Colleges into the 21st Century; Transforming Higher Education: A Vision for Learning in the 21st Century, Dolence and Harris, 1995)*

Demographic

Assume that between 1998 and 2010 there is expected to be a 35% increase (530,000) in the number of students attending community colleges in California—Tidal Wave II. *(Providing for Progress, California Higher Education Enrollment Demand and Resources into the 21st Century, Cal Postsecondary Education Commission, 2000)*

Assume that Los Angeles County's population will grow by 3.6% over the next ten years (half of the state-wide growth rate). *(LA County, Demographic Research Unit, June, 2001)*

Assume that LACC's service area is less African-American, less Caucasian, more Asian, more Hispanic, lower income, and with more unemployed than LA County. *(LA County, Demographic Research Unit, June, 2001)*

Educational

Assume that universal access will continue to be an important issue with each community college needing to determine which community members it should serve, what services it should provide, and how those services will be provided. *(Open Doors and Open Minds: Improving Access and Quality in California's Community Colleges, Little Hoover Commission, 2000)*

Assume that higher education is in the midst of a shift from a producer-driven, or faculty-directed endeavor, to one that is consumer driven, or learner centered. *("The Future of Colleges: 9 Inevitable Changes," The Chronicle of Higher Education, Arthur E. Levine, October 27, 2000)*

Assume that the national demand for learning outcomes has prompted community colleges to reduce the gap between learning outcomes and job requirements. *(The Knowledge Net: Connecting Communities, Learners, and Colleges, American Association for Community Colleges, 2000)*

Assume that "under preparedness" will continue to be a major problem as Los Angeles County students score in the lowest one-third of scores in the nation at most grade levels. *(The 2001-2002 Budget Bill: Major Issues Facing the Legislature, Legislative Analyst's Office)*

Assume that the highest grade completed by 11 percent of adults (20 years and older) in Los Angeles is sixth grade or less and that 24 percent have never finished high school. *(Economic Policy Institute, 2001)*

Assume that there is an enormous gap between the current educational status of Latinos as a group and what is needed to meet 21st century work force demands and family income needs. *(American Dream Makers: Facts and Figures about L.A.'s Latino Emerging Majority, United Way, 2000)*

Assume that higher education providers will become more numerous and more diverse as corporate, international, and for-profit interests expand the educational marketplace by offering job specific skills and credentials through many different delivery systems (using various technologies). *("The Future of Colleges: 9 Inevitable Changes," The Chronicle of Higher Education, Arthur E. Levine, October 27, 2000)*

Assume that the elimination of remediation from four-year institutions (Cal State University, in particular) is a trend that will continue to be either a problem looking for a solution or an opportunity looking for a plan. *(The State-by-State Report Card for Higher Education, The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, 2000)*

Assume that in the last decade there has been a 70% increase in adults with less than a 5th grade education. *(American Dream Makers: Facts and Figures about L.A.'s Latino Emerging Majority, United Way, 2000)*

Assume that Hispanic youth still trail non-Hispanic youth in educational achievement, especially in proportion of degrees conferred. *(Toward a State of Learning, California Higher Education for the Twenty-First Century, California Citizens Commission on Higher Education, 1999)*

Public Policy

Assume that California community colleges will continue to receive significantly less per student funding from the state than other states fund community colleges. *("Community Colleges Carry Heavy Load, Get Short End of the Stick," June, 2001, Sacramento Bee, Dan Walters)*

Assume that there will be a continued focus on externally-driven accountability in higher education, particularly the assessment of student learning outcomes. *(Back to the Future in Y2K, Research and Planning Group for California Community Colleges, 2000)*

Assume that the Partnership for Excellence Program is California's first, but probably not the last, step in the direction of providing fiscal recognition for educational outcomes and demonstrated performance (i.e., performance-based categorical funding). *(Toward a State of Learning, California Higher Education for the Twenty-First Century, California Citizens Commission on Higher Education, 1999)*

Assume that an outmoded structure and regulatory jungle will continue to plague California community colleges (every major independent study of the colleges done over the last 15 years has reached roughly the same conclusion). *(Toward a State of Learning, California Higher Education for the Twenty-First Century, California Citizens Commission on Higher Education, 1999)*

Societal

Assume that Latinos clearly see themselves as the future leaders of Los Angeles County and they are resolved to lead in an inclusive, multicultural way. *(American Dream Makers: Facts and Figures about L.A.'s Latino Emerging Majority, United Way, 2000)*

Assume that the new role of education is as a force for sustaining transformational change. *(AAHE Bulletin, June, 2001)*

Assume that California community colleges will play a unique role in addressing many of California's vital social needs such as respect for diversity, responsible citizenship, and lifelong learning. *(Facing the Millennium: California Community Colleges into the 21st Century)*

Technological

Assume that the greatest technology challenge on college campuses will be to assist faculty efforts to integrate information technology into instruction. *(Campus Computing 2000: The Campus Computing Project, Kenneth C. Green, March, 2001)*

Assume that the notion of a "digital divide" is real and that minorities, in general, do not have access to computers in their homes. *(American Dream Makers: Facts and Figures about L.A.'s Latino Emerging Majority, United Way, 2000)*

Assume that categorical funding for technology will continue—although sporadically—into the future. *(The State of the California Community Colleges Fall Leadership Conference, September 28, 2000, Thomas J. Nussbaum)*

Assume that student expectations related to technology have changed forever. *(The Knowledge Net: Connecting Communities, Learners, and Colleges, American Association of Community Colleges, 2000)*

Assume that, in addition to the classroom, technology can and should be used dynamically to improve the cost-effectiveness of key institutional operations related to educating an increasing number of students. *(Campus Computing 2000: The Campus Computing Project, Kenneth C. Green, March 2001)*

SUMMARY

By aligning our efforts at all levels with the eight priorities developed through the visioning process, we will be:

an urban oasis of learning that

educates minds

opens hearts

and

celebrates community.

PRIORITY 1

Foster a culture of academic excellence by systematically strengthening the educational program and the quality of teaching that lead directly to greater student success.

PRIORITY 2

Maintain and enhance a safe, aesthetically pleasing campus environment that encourages involvement, nurtures community, and leads to student success.

PRIORITY 3

Expand and strengthen partnerships with business, industry, educational institutions, neighborhood groups, and regional associations.

PRIORITY 4

Create a student-centered learning environment that focuses on students' needs and reduces the barriers to their success.

PRIORITY 5

Enhance the college's visibility and reputation for quality.

PRIORITY 6

Increase the resources available to the college through state and district allocation processes and through extramural development efforts.

PRIORITY 7

Develop and implement plans to enhance the efficient allocation of resources that support the college's vision and priorities.

PRIORITY 8

Collect and use data systematically to make informed decisions that lead to continuous organizational improvement.

COLLEGE ADMINISTRATION

Dr. Mary S. Spangler, President

Dr. Jackie Ireland, Vice Pres, Academic Affairs

Myra Siegel, Vice Pres, Student Services

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